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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine how student teachers perceived their cooperating teacher's leadership practices. The Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire Form was completed during the final week of clinical field experience by 212 student teachers. The questionnaire was based on four identified leadership styles used by mentors: (1) directing--telling student teachers what, how, and when to perform structured tasks and expecting precision and productive output; (2) coaching--demonstrating, modeling, developing talent, and resolving conflicts considerately; (3) supporting--maintaining harmony, praising, and emphasizing consideration; and (4) delegating--allowing freedom to experiment, tolerating uncertainty, and facilitating. Three specific leadership behaviors were subsumed under each of these mentoring styles. Findings indicated that cooperating teachers used multiple leadership behaviors and that they used all of the mentoring styles equally. (JD)

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MENTORING STUDENT TEACHERS: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

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INTRODUCTION

When many professionals reflect on the induction process of their chosen profession, they often mention other people who affected their development in this initial stage of their career. The relationships they had with peers, family members, and supervisors contributed much to their feelings of satisfaction or frustration. Frequently the young adult entering his/her profession will specifically mention a more experienced adult professional who is his/her teacher, sponsor, exemplar, counselor, provider of moral support, and facilitator i.e. a mentor, while the two of them have a significant relationship. (Halpin and Winer, 1957; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, and McKee, 1978).

When a superior and a subordinate have an interactive relationship there is reason to believe that two kinds of interaction will occur: 1) the superior will exercise leadership behaviors because they have legitimate power and the expertise to lead the subordinate into the profession and 2) the superior's and subordinate's relationship will involve interpersonal aspects such that frequent discussions will occur that relate to personal and social relations, out of which develop systems of shared expectations, patterns of emotional relatedness and modes of social adjustment. Thus, superiors and subordinates will interact like peers. A logical conclusion to draw is that the mentoring process used by superiors creates a relationship where multiple leadership behaviors will be practiced.

Cooperating teachers are in a supervisory position where they could serve as both leaders and mentors for student teachers during the pre-induction experience called student teaching. The research in the area of student teaching describes experiences student teachers should have; the

psychological, sociological, and emotional problems of student teachers; their characteristics; their attitudes; their expectations; and how student teachers are placed, supervised, and evaluated. In the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) twenty year cumulative index from 1966-1986 there are hundreds of articles on student teaching. There are no article titles that specifically make reference to leadership behaviors or mentoring styles practiced by cooperating teachers. When the ERIC subject index on mentoring was examined, 92 articles surfaced, but none have been written about student teachers. Merriam 91983) examined eight different data bases. No research appears on student teacher mentoring relationships. Galvex-Hjornevik (1985b) reviewed the literature on mentoring with a focus on teaching. A small number of articles deal with inductees (first year teachers) during the induction process working with mentors, but none deal with student teachers. A comprehensive mentoring bibliography was done by Noller and Frey (1983). They reported on 235 articles. One article dealt with graduate student interns working with a mentor who used only three leadership behaviors to help the trainee develop professionally (Gracie, 1979). Leadership practices of the mentoring process have received no systematic inquiry. Specifically, there is a lack of knowledge with respect to the leadership behaviors and mentoring styles cooperating teachers employ in their work with student teachers.

Purpose of the Study

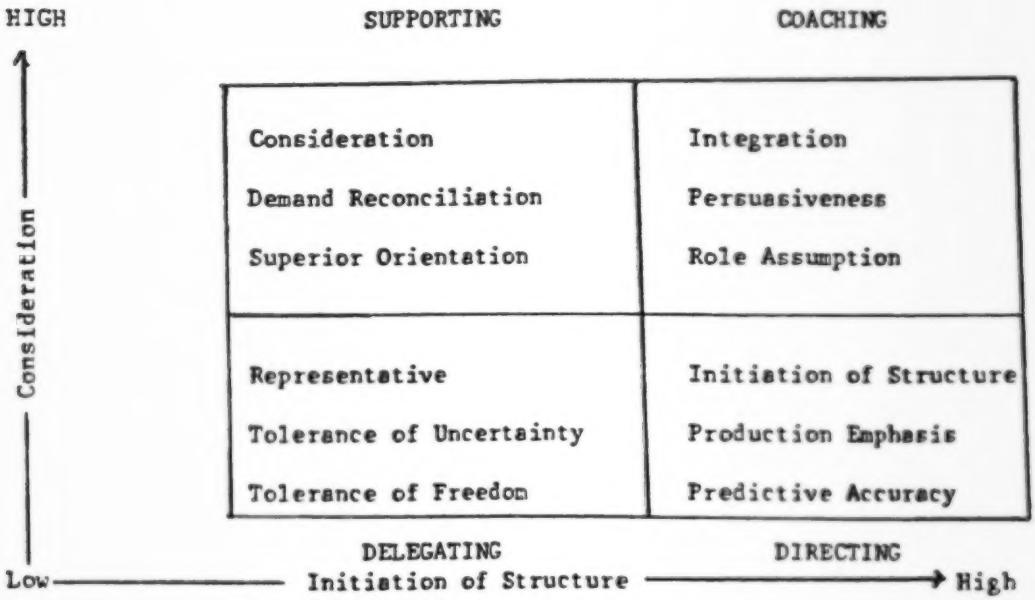
The intent of this study is to find out if mentoring styles were used by cooperating teachers as perceived by student teachers during the clinical field experience called student teaching.

In order to more fully understand the mentoring functions of

cooperating teachers there is a need for more knowledge about the leadership behaviors they use in their work with student teachers. In order to accomplish the purpose of this study the model below was constructed by these investigators based on the literature reviewed.

Model 1

Intersection of Leadership Behaviors and Mentoring Styles



Twelve specific leadership behaviors were tested. Three leadership behaviors were assigned to each of four mentoring styles. According to Anderson and Shannon (1988), styles are broader constructs than behaviors and they denote recurring patterns of behavior. They go on and say, "a mentor must stand ready to exhibit any or all of the functions (styles) as the need arises" (p.40). It should be concluded that if a cooperating teacher only practices one style he is only leading in one direction. To serve as a mentor the cooperating teacher must practice or be capable of

practicing all four styles.

Definition of Terms

A significant problem facing researchers studying leadership practices and the mentoring process is finding operational definitions. Previous authors verbalized their definitions in a variety of ways, from paragraph form to simply listing observable behaviors. The following definitions apply to this study.

Leadership Behaviors twelve leadership behaviors were described by the LBDQ-Form XII developed by the Ohio State Leadership Studies Program:

Tolerance of Uncertainty = able to allow doubt, some indecision, and variability.

Tolerance of Freedom = allows followers independence for initiative, decision, and action.

Representative = being or acting as the agent for another.

Consideration = regards the comfort, well being, status, and contributions of followers.

Superior Orientation = displays cooperation and maintains cordial relations with superiors and strives for higher professionalism

Demand Reconciliation = reduces disorder, inconsistencies or differences so harmony or friendship is restored.

Role Assumption = actively exercises their role rather than surrending it to others.

Persuasiveness = being able to use argument and demonstration effectively to teach.

Integration = maintains a closely knit organization by developing talent and resolving inner-member conflict.

Production Emphasis = applies pressure for productive output.

Predictive Accuracy = anticipates no errors and expects precision.

Initiation of Structure = clearly defines own role and lets followers know what to expect.

Mentoring a nurturing process in which a more skilled and experienced person practices leadership styles that 1) direct, 2) coach, 3) support, and 4) delegate to less experienced persons for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and personal development within the context of a caring relationship.

Directing = telling student teachers what, how and when to perform structured tasks and expecting precision and productive output.

Coaching = demonstrating, selling and modeling expectations, developing talent, using persuasiveness and resolving conflicts in a considerate way.

Supporting = maintaining harmony, giving praise, being cooperative, participative and always emphasizing consideration.

Delegating = allowing freedom to experiment, tolerating uncertainty and being a facilitator for others.

Problem and Research Questions

Three assumptions undergirded this study: 1) leadership behaviors of an immediate supervisor can be identified by their subordinates (Fleishman, 1957; Halpin and Winer, 1957; Hemphill and Coons, 1957; Stogdill, 1974; STein, 1981; Alleman, 1982; Gordon, 1986); 2) effective leadership is situational; it is flexible depending upon the people being led and their relationship. A leader must exercise multiple leadership practices if he/she expects to be successful (Reddin, 1970; Blanchard and Hersey, 1976; Burns, 1976; Fiedler, 1976; Owens, 1981; Hersey and Blanchard, 1982); and 3) having a mentor is crucial to the success of young adult professionals

in their career development (Sheehy, 1976b; Levinson et al., 1978; Roche, 1979; Rawles, 1980; Phillip-Jones, 1982; Merriam, 1983; Torrence, 1983; Soroka, Mahlios, and Stahlhut, 1985).

The problem investigated in this study was to determine how student teachers perceived their cooperating teachers leadership practices. Specifically, the problem had three parts: 1) to identify leadership behaviors that cooperating teachers used, 2) to see if there were dominant mentoring styles that existed when a cooperating teacher and a student teacher worked together and 3) to find out if the leadership behaviors and mentoring styles influenced the student teacher's success as measured by his/her final evaluation checklist.

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How were the leadership behaviors, as measured by the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire Form XII (LBDQ-XII), ranked, and how frequently was each mentoring style exercised?

2. When the dependent variable was the success of the student teacher, as measured by his/her 11-item final evaluation checklist, what leadership behaviors, as measured by the LBDQ-XII, were related to the dependent variable?

3. What were the relationships between the leadership behaviors, as measured by the LBDQ-XII, and the dependent variable when the cooperating teacher and the student teacher were of the same sex or different sex?

4. What were the relationships between the leadership behaviors and mentoring styles?

5. What were the relationships between the dependent variable and the four styles of mentoring used by cooperating teachers?

6. What were the relationships between the various cooperating teacher

demographic variables and the dependent variable?

7. What were the relationships between the various student teacher demographic variable and the dependent variable?

Sample

The LBDQ-XII was completed during the final week of the clinical field experience by 212 University of Northern Iowa student teachers. They had their clinical field experiences in 1 of 14 possible regional centers during the second or third quarter of the 1987/88 academic year. Student teachers had a minimum of eight weeks (five days/week and eight hours/day) to observe their cooperating teachers' leadership behaviors before they completed the survey instrument. Along with the 100 leadership behavior items surveyed, 14 demographic factors and 11 success evaluation scores were collected. Analysis of the data collected was completed by the software program, The statistical Package for the Social Sciences, revised edition (SPSS-X2.1). Specific tests included: Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients, chi-square, step-wise multiple regressions, two Cronbach's Alpha Reliabilities, and other descriptive statistical measures.

Approximately 51% of the student teachers were elementary majors (k-6) and 49% were secondary majors (7-12). About 75% of the student teachers were females and 25% were male. Also, 73% of the student teachers were traditional students and 27% were non-traditional (by age) students. There were 64% female and 36% male cooperating teachers. These cooperating teachers varied in their experience: 22% had never supervised a student teacher, 34% had some supervision experience, and 44% were very experienced. Professionally, 50% of the cooperating teachers had a BA/BA+ degree and the other 50% had an MA/MA+ degree.

Conclusions

The intent of this study was to find out if mentoring styles were used by cooperating teachers as perceived by student teachers during their clinical field experience called student teaching. After a specific mentoring model was constructed, the objectives of this study were to identify specific leadership behaviors cooperating teachers use, to determine if any of the inferred mentoring styles that incorporated the leadership behaviors tested were dominant, and to determine if any of these leadership behaviors or mentoring styles influenced a student teacher's success as measured by his/her final evaluation checklist. The following conclusions are based on the findings to the seven research questions asked.

Research question 1 examined how frequently twelve leadership behaviors and the four mentoring styles they inferred were exercised. All of the leadership behaviors and all of the mentoring styles were exercised equally. Cooperating teachers used multiple leadership practices and these flexible practices were observable by student teachers. The conclusion is that cooperating teachers use contingency management techniques as part of their supervisory practices when they work with student teachers. This means that cooperating teachers should anticipate that they will need to vary their leadership practices so they can better lead student teachers during changing situations.

Research questions 2 and 3 examined how the twelve leadership behaviors were related to a student teacher's success. Regardless if student teachers were in elementary or secondary assignments or if they worked with same sex or different sex cooperating teachers, their success was related

to the same behaviors. A leadership behavior that gives the student teacher more freedom to make decisions and for taking action and a leadership behavior that considers the student teacher's comfort and contributions to classroom procedures are positively related to a student teacher's success. On the other hand, leadership behaviors that initiate structure by defining roles and emphasizing productive output are negatively related to a student teacher's success. The amount of relationship between the above described behaviors and success increases when cooperating teachers and student teachers are of the same sex and even more so when women work with women. The conclusion is that a cooperating teacher's leadership behaviors can both positively and negatively influence a student teacher's success. This implies that supervisors need to be sensitive to the potential impacts and consequences of their leadership behaviors.

Research question 4 examined the reliability of the conceptual mentoring model tested. The interrelatedness of the leadership behaviors with the mentoring styles they were elements of was significant for all four mentoring styles. The model demonstrated acceptable consistency of use for all the mentoring styles and for each leadership behavior contained within a given style. The conclusion is that this conceptual model of mentoring is functional and appropriate for an educational setting where cooperating teachers are supervising student teachers. However, to use the model effectively, the implication is that cooperating teachers must use or be capable of using all four mentoring styles rather than only some of the mentoring styles.

Research question 5 examined how the four mentoring styles were related to a student teacher's success. Cooperating teachers who generally support

their student teachers by maintaining harmony, giving praise, and being cooperative and those who delegate responsibility, allow freedom for experimentation and are facilitators, positively influence their student teacher's success. Cooperating teachers who are directive and tell student teachers what, how and when to perform classroom tasks negatively influence their student teacher' success. Evidence did not support that cooperating teachers who coach their student teachers by demonstrating, modeling and using other persuasive techniques, have any influence on their student teacher's success. The overall conclusion is that a cooperating teacher's mentoring style can positively, negatively and neutrally affect a student teacher's success. This implies supervisors need to be alert and sensitive to the multiple impacts and consequences of the mentoring styles they use.

Research questions 6 and 7 examined how student teacher and cooperating teacher demographics were related to a student teacher's success. Cooperating teachers whose highest degree was a BA/BA+ and cooperating teachers at the elementary level (K-6) evaluated their student teachers much higher than was typical for all student teachers. If the following premise is accepted: that more secondary teachers have an MA degree than do elementary teachers, that elementary faculty tend to focus more on effort and personal qualities while secondary faculty focus more on mastery of subject matter and that secondary faculty spend less time interacting with their student teachers than elementary faculty, then the conclusion is that cooperating teachers who have closer relationships with their student teachers will evaluate them higher. This implies that student teachers who want higher evaluations need to work at establishing close relationships with their cooperating teachers.

Recommendations

There are several findings that could be used as a result of this study as long as they are not broadly interpreted and hastily applied. This study was a descriptive investigation and not an experimental study that determined causes.

We know that cooperating teachers used multiple leadership behaviors and that they used all the mentoring styles equally. We now need to know if there is an order or sequence to their leadership practices, are there supervisory situations that warrant the usage of a given leadership behavior or do these situations warrant the usage of a mentoring style, can a student teacher elicit given supervisory practices from cooperating teachers and how do these supervisory practices change when student teaching is a semester in length?

We also know supervisory practices affect a student teacher's success. We now need to know why some mentoring styles and behaviors positively, negatively and neutrally affect a student teacher's success?

This study was the first of many possible studies. It was a pioneer investigation. The possible carry over of the findings of this study to induction practices used with first year teachers in public schools is yet to be observed or documented. Leadership practices between colleagues must be better understood before mentoring models for public schools are implemented.

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